

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 17-23 without prejudice or disclaimer as they have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Please add new claim 37.

Please amend claims 1, 5, 9, 13, 15, and 24.

Please note that all claims currently pending and under consideration in the referenced application are shown below, in clean form, for clarity. Please enter these claims as amended. Also attached is a version with markings to show changes made to the claims.

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1. (Amended) A telepresence system for allowing an operator to interact with a remote operating environment, the system comprising:
- one or more input devices, wherein the one or more input devices produce raw data representative of operator commands;
 - an input conversion module for converting the raw data into a zone structure wherein the zone structure represents the operator commands in a format independent of any of the one or more input devices;
 - one or more device modules corresponding to one or more telepresence devices, the one or more device modules for converting the zone structure into telepresence device commands specific to the one or more telepresence devices, the telepresence device commands corresponding to at least a portion of the operator commands; and
 - a configuration module for associating a specific one of the one or more input devices which generated the zone structure with a specific one of the one or more telepresence devices which responds to the telepresence device commands resulting from the zone structure.
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2. A system as defined in claim 1, wherein the one or more input devices comprise one or more of: a headset, a keyboard, a mouse, and a joystick.

3. A system as defined in claim 1, wherein only one of the one or more input devices is permitted to produce raw data at a time.

4. A system as defined in claim 1, wherein one of the one or more input devices is capable of controlling a plurality of the one or more telepresence devices.

AS 5. (Amended) A system as defined in claim 37, wherein the communication link is a wireless communication link.

6. A system as defined in claim 1, wherein the one or more telepresence devices comprise one or more of a stereo camera set, a zoom camera, a pan and tilt device, a slider bar, and a robot.

7. A system as defined in claim 6, wherein the pan and tilt device is connected to the stereo camera set and is capable of orienting the stereo camera set.

8. A system as defined in claim 6, wherein the pan and tilt device is connected to the zoom camera and is capable of orienting the zoom camera.


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ALG 9. (Amended) In a system having input devices and telepresence devices, a method for controlling one or more associated telepresence devices with a selected input device, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving raw data representative of movement commands from the selected input device;
converting the raw data into a zone structure, wherein the zone structure represents the movement commands in a format independent of the selected input device and the one or more associated telepresence devices;

when the selected input device is selectively associated with the one or more associated telepresence devices, processing the zone structure with a device module corresponding to each of the one or more associated telepresence devices to obtain telepresence device commands corresponding to at least a portion of the movement commands for each of the associated telepresence devices; and
transmitting the movement commands to the associated telepresence devices.


10. A method as defined in claim 9, wherein the selected input device is one of a headset, a keyboard, a mouse, or a joystick.

11. A method as defined in claim 9, wherein the zone structure is compatible with the telepresence devices.

12. A method as defined in claim 9, wherein the zone structure is capable of representing a plurality of speeds and directions.

 13. (Amended) A method as defined in claim 9, wherein the associated telepresence devices only respond to portions of the zone structure that correspond to the axes of the associated telepresence devices.

14. A method as defined in claim 9, wherein the raw data corresponds to actions of an operator.

 15. (Amended) A method as defined in claim 9, further comprising the step of executing the movement commands by the associated telepresence devices.

16. A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 9.

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24. (Amended) A telepresence system for allowing an operator to interact with a remote operating environment, the telepresence system comprising:

- a plurality of input devices;
- a plurality of telepresence devices, wherein one or more of the telepresence devices is configured to be controlled by one of the plurality of input devices and one or more of the telepresence devices is configured to provide a visual representation of the operating environment;
- a computer comprising:
 - an input conversion module for receiving raw data representative of operator commands from at least one of the plurality of input devices and converting the raw data to a zone structure wherein the zone structure represents the operator commands in a format independent of any of the one or more input devices; and
 - a plurality of device modules corresponding to the plurality of telepresence devices, wherein the device modules receive the zone structure and convert the zone structure to movement commands corresponding to the operator commands for each respective telepresence device; and
 - a communication link for transmitting the movement commands to the telepresence devices.

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25. A system as defined in claim 24, wherein the telepresence devices comprises one or more stereo camera sets each connected with a different pan and tilt device and a zoom camera connected with another pan and tilt device.

26. A system as defined in claim 25, wherein the zoom camera is capable of providing stereo vision.

27. A system as defined in claim 24, wherein the raw data generated by the input devices correspond to zones, each zone representative of movement in a particular direction and speed.

28. A system as defined in claim 27, wherein the zone structure integrates any of the input devices with one or more of the telepresence devices.

29. A system as defined in claim 24, wherein the computer further comprises a configuration module.

30. A system as defined in claim 29, wherein the configuration module comprises one or more views, wherein each view defines the one or more telepresence devices controlled by a single input device.

31. A system as defined in claim 30, wherein the operator may select a different view.

32. A system as defined in claim 29, wherein the one or more views stored in the configuration module permits a single input device to control different groups of telepresence devices.

33. A system as defined in claim 24, wherein the plurality of telepresence devices provide the operator with a visual representation of the operating environment.

34. A system as defined in claim 33, wherein the visual representation provides depth perception to the operator.

35. A system as defined in claim 24, wherein the communications link is wireless communication.

36. A system as defined in claim 24, wherein the plurality of input devices allow the operator to control the telepresence devices without the use of the operator's hands.

37. (New) The system as defined in claim 1, further comprising a communication link, wherein the telepresence device commands are received by the one or more telepresence devices over a communication link such that the one or more input devices are configured to control the one or more telepresence devices, wherein the telepresence devices provide the operator with one or more visual representations of the operating environment.